

THE OFFICIAL MINUTEMAN CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS

VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL



Minuteman Civil Defense Corps

Volunteer Training Manual



*Minuteman Civil Defense Corps
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Section 1 Volunteer Relations

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES - *SOP*

The Standard Operating Procedures, commonly referred to as the “SOP”, are a set of rules and guidelines established by *Minuteman Corps* to direct operations and ensure the safety of volunteers, staff and the public in general. The intent is to protect the organization and all its staff and volunteers from straying into situations that could end up having adverse legal consequences, result in personal injury, or have a negative effect on the image of the *Minuteman Corps* as a whole. The SOP is the foundation for all field operations and must be understood and followed by everyone involved in this monumental task. To stray from the SOP could prove disastrous to the mission.

The following section is a run-down of each point within the SOP, explaining each point and its impact on the operation. Please ensure that you are familiar and comfortable with the SOP before heading into the field, understanding completely its contents and impact on all of us involved with *Minuteman Corps*. Because of the nature of our activities and the environment in which we are operating, straying from the SOP will not be tolerated and members found doing so will be asked to leave the project.

1. Minuteman Corps volunteers are courteous to everyone with whom they come into contact.

While this may seem self-explanatory, it can never be overstated. *Minuteman Corps volunteers* are constantly under the scrutiny of the public and media and are being held to the highest standards. It is imperative to the mission that we constantly meet and exceed the expectations of the public and continue to reinforce the image of the *Minuteman Corps* as caring, concerned individuals, always willing to answer the call and help when needed.

As volunteers, we have already proven that we care about our fellow citizens simply by showing up. By exhibiting a courteous and professional demeanor, we will continue to gain the trust and support not only of our fellow citizens, but of the nation as a whole.

2. Minuteman Corps volunteers do not respond to taunts or harassment from outside agitators. Protect yourself by documenting all interactions with a video camera, a still photo camera, and/or an audio recording device.

This is an interesting and dynamic subject, since agitators come in many forms. *Minuteman Corps* encourages all volunteers to look out for one another and help each other deal with situations when they arise. Don't let your emotions get the best of you

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and end up causing a situation that could be embarrassing or life threatening for fellow volunteers. It is important to always carry a video camera, still photo camera and/or an audio recorder to document harassment directed at you or other volunteers.

The best approach is to ignore and remove yourself from any potential confrontation. Make every attempt to avoid interaction with antagonists. Ignore and do not feed stupidity. Civilized, reserved and non-confrontational conversation with antagonist is strongly recommended. Typically, once people get to know the volunteers they're "talking to", their pre-conceived ideas of who we are and what we're all about begin to fade. You can watch them reconsidering things before your eyes and suddenly will find that you have "disarmed" them.

These people want nothing more than an incident that YOU have initiated. Their goal is to ruin our reputation and standing within the communities where we operate, thus causing our efforts to become less effective. Don't give them the pleasure. Often, a friendly smile, wave and a thank you is enough to set them on fire inside and send them storming away to rethink their tactics. When in doubt or in an uncomfortable situation, contact your shift supervisor immediately.

3. Minuteman Corps volunteers only observe, report and direct the Border Patrol to suspected illegal aliens or illegal activities.

This rule is vitally important to the success of our efforts and continuation of future operations. Here we begin to travel into the realm of legal ramifications, so *tread lightly!* This one rule sums up the extent of our operations in the field. Don't stray from this rule and you'll always be safe.

4. Minuteman Corps volunteers do not verbally contact, physically gesture to or have any form of communication with suspected illegal aliens.

Here the mire thickens. There is a fine line between what's legal and illegal; *don't cross that line!* When suspected illegal activity is observed, simply report the pertinent information to Border Patrol and let them handle the rest; they're the professionals.

By gesturing, communicating with or physically contacting suspected illegal aliens, you expose yourself and the ***Minuteman Corps organization*** to lawsuits and reprimands. Our public image is important to us, and one person's "compassion" could bring about the entire organization's collapse. Please, for the sake of us all, do not speak to, direct, signal to, gesture to, or touch any suspected illegal aliens. When in doubt, contact your shift supervisor immediately.

5. Minuteman Corps volunteers follow the Standard Operating Procedures to the letter and spirit.

At the risk of beating a dead horse here, we want to reiterate this: Don't stray from the SOP! It exists to protect you, not confine you. Need we say more?

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6. *Minuteman Corps volunteers adhere to all federal, state and local laws, understanding that we are being held to a higher standard than the average citizen.*

We previously addressed this in procedure #1, but feel it is important enough to address again. Your nation and the world are watching, and they're watching *you*. While each individual act of kindness and professionalism, compassion and goodwill will likely never be reported by the media, rest assured that any negative comments, irrational actions or illegal actions will be covered extensively.

You must be constantly aware of what you say and the way in which you carry yourself. The opposition is just waiting for us to screw up. Stay alert, smile and remember the old saying: "*Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not after you.*"

By obeying all federal, state and local laws, we will succeed in our objective; we never give the opposition any ammunition to use against us. Let's keep it that way.

7. *Minuteman Corps volunteers understand that, while our actions cannot stop illegal activity along the border, we can change world perception and national thought concerning Homeland Security and the border.*

This is the understatement of the year, and also happens to be the reason that we're here. Our efforts, both as individuals and as a group, are intended to raise the alarm in America that we as a nation must do something and *we must do it now*.

We, as *Minuteman Corps* volunteers, are setting not only an example for other Americans to follow, but a precedent we hope will have a lasting effect on how border security is viewed for generations to come. You should be proud to be a part of American history-in-the-making, just as we are proud to have you serving alongside us. Through our efforts, we will make a difference, and, given time, will bring about the changes in policy, regulation and enforcement that this country so desperately needs.

8. *Minuteman Corps volunteers monitor their own behavior, the people next to them, and the group as a whole to ensure compliance with the SOP.*

This goes back to procedure #2. Help the people around you! Life on the line can be stressful. Don't let fatigue cause you to make poor decisions or act in a way detrimental to our overall mission. By monitoring each other, we ensure that we're all "on our best behavior." If you see someone acting in a manner not consistent with the SOP, alert and remind them of their responsibility.

There's no room out here for free-lancing, insubordination or flat-out disregard for the rules. That's how people end up disgraced, injured or worse. Any time you witness someone in blatant disregard of the SOP, notify your shift supervisor at once.

9. *Minutemen leave no garbage behind, following strict pack-in/pack-out procedures.*

Pure and simple: Don't be a slob. Respect the people of the community that we're here to help by leaving things cleaner than the way you found them. This helps maintain our image as an organization, builds trust with our host communities, and keeps *you* out of trouble with the local authorities. When in doubt, bag it.

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Let's keep our environment pristine and give the appearance that we were never there. Who knows, maybe we'll even end up with some unlikely supporters as a result.

10. Minutemen respect the property rights of everyone, start no fires, never drive off-road and follow the directions of all law enforcement personnel.

This is the summary, blanket-type procedure intended to cover the most important of the considerations we run across out there on the line. Remember, private property is just that—private--so do not cross fences. Get caught traveling somewhere you shouldn't be: the issue is legally out of our hands; you're on your own, let alone the bad press that you'll bring along with your exploratory expedition. When assigned to a station, please stay put, not only for legal reasons but for the sake of safety as well.

Starting a fire is always a bad idea, no matter how cold you may feel. For starters, it's more than likely illegal in the area you're operating. Secondly, if the wind picks up, we'll all end up watching federal and state firefighters on TV trying to contain what has become known as "the Minuteman Fire." Great!--just what we don't need! Let's avoid not only the extreme embarrassment and high fines, but also the possibility of having someone injured or killed as a result of a quick, combustible cure for the cold. Try hugging instead--can you feel the love?!

Not to put too fine a point on it, but...

ABSOLUTELY NO FIRES ARE ALLOWED!!!

Get it? Got it? Good...

Next, please stay on the roads and pathways that are assigned in your area of operations. By doing so, you ensure that you'll always be accountable, never be trespassing, and most importantly, you'll never get lost. Rest assured your shift supervisor will *not* be excited to have to drop what he's doing to come locate you in the midst of your wilderness wanderings, and you could end up getting hurt out there. It's happened in the past... Stick to the trails and you won't go wrong. That goes for your feet *and* your tires.

Finally, when law enforcement is present, they're in charge. Any instructions they give must be acknowledged and followed to the letter, otherwise you risk getting a free ride and wearing shiny bracelets, too. We're here to support, not hinder, the local, state and federal law enforcement officers and agents, and want to give them the best support we can, including getting out of the way when it's time to get out of the way. Our relationship with law enforcement is just as important as our relationship with the local community, so pay attention to what's going on around you when they're present, and give them plenty of room to operate! They're already under a lot of stress; let's don't make things any worse for them.

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The *Minuteman Corps* Standard Operating Procedures are a simple, common-sense approach to keeping you, the staff, the organization and others safe and ensuring our continued success. By operating within these guidelines, you certify that you and everyone around you will get the most out of this experience and go home feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment, knowing that what we've done here has truly mattered. Take time to review the SOP whenever you have a free moment; your knowledge of these procedures will definitely keep you out of harm's way and could even end up saving a life! Always be prepared to document situations with law enforcement, antagonists, or people acting illegally. Good luck, be safe, be proud and stay hydrated!

Section 2: Communications

Radios

Radios will be your primary form of communications as you serve your tour of duty on the border. A brief discussion of what types of radios, how to use the radios and proper radio procedure will prepare the volunteer to utilize this vital link to its maximum efficiency.

FSR radios. All volunteers will need a good-quality FSR radio while serving on the line during *Minuteman Corps* operations. What makes a good FSR? Look for a good brand name like Motorola, Cobra, and Midland, etc. There are certain features you will want in your radio. Important among these are:

1. Ease of use: you will want to familiarize yourself with all of the features on your radio and how to manipulate between channels, how to turn off/on desired features, and how to "lock" in your settings.
2. Rechargeable battery packs and a charger. While not necessary, it will cut down on the cost of replacing batteries as they go dead. Try to get one that will run off your vehicle's power receptacle.
3. You will find that an ear phone, lapel type microphone device will be invaluable. This is particularly true during night operations when the noise of radio transmissions can compromise the volunteer's position. You will find the radios easier to use than a radio without them.

How to Use Your Radio

This section is not designed to describe the function of your radio, but rather how *you* should use it. First your radio should not be used for unnecessary chatter. It is critical that the net stay clear for essential traffic that supports the mission.

It is also important to remember that just sending a message is not communications. The message must be sent, received and understood. So take your time, control your breathing and voice and then verify the receiver has understood your message. Do your best to disable any of the beeps and alarms that are common on these types of

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radios. Normally these will indicate the end of the sender's transmission. Study your manual and learn to disable these features. Decide in advance on your radio call sign, practice using the radios at home so they are a familiar and comfortable part of your communications plan.

Proper Radio Procedure:

Time and experience has proven that certain procedures enhance radio communications. The following are the basic guidelines to familiarize the volunteer with some of those procedures.

1. Press your transmit key, then wait for a count of two before beginning your voice transmission. When you have completed your voice transmission, wait for another count of two before releasing the transmit button.
2. Start your transmission by identifying who you are calling, and then who you are. Example: "*Shift Leader, Shift Leader, this is Position One calling*"
3. When you respond, identify to whom you are responding. Example: "*Position One this is Shift Leader go ahead*"
4. Give your message calmly and clearly. Example: "*Shift Leader, Position One has spotted 6 illegals moving north at mile marker 46.5 We have called Border Patrol and they are on the way, do you copy?*"
5. When you receive a message be sure to repeat enough back so the sender can verify that you have the message correct. Example: "*Roger Position One, Shift Leader copies 6 illegals spotted, Border Patrol has been notified*"
6. Give a brief verification and clear the channel. Example: "*That is correct Shift Leader, Position One is standing by*"

Make sure your transmission is simple and easy to understand. When you get on the line your Shift Supervisor will probably have some additional things he may require.

In addition it is a real help to learn the phonetic alphabet as some letters or names are easily confused over the radio. Below is a copy of the phonetic alphabet; take a little time to study it.

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Phonetic Alphabet

Letter	Pronunciation	Letter	Pronunciation
A	Alpha (AL fah)	N	November (no VEM ber)
B	Bravo (BRAH VOH)	O	Oscar (OSS cah)
C	Charlie (CHAR lee)	P	Papa (pah PAH)
D	Delta (DELL tah)	Q	Quebec (keh BECK)
E	Echo (ECK oh)	R	Romeo (ROW me oh)
F	Foxtrot (FOKS trot)	S	Sierra (see AIR rah)
G	Golf (GOLF)	T	Tango (TANG go)
H	Hotel (hoh TELL)	U	Uniform (YOU nee form)
I	India (IN dee ah)	V	Victor (VIK tah)
J	Juliatt (JEW lee ETT)	W	Whiskey (WISS key)
K	Kilo (KEY loh)	X	X Ray (ECKS RAY)
L	Lima (LEE mah)	Y	Yankee (YANG key)
M	Mike (MIKE)	Z	Zulu (ZOO loo)

Note: The syllables printed in capital letters are to be stressed

Ham Radios

Ham radios are invaluable to our communications. All efforts must be made to recruit a communications officer and get volunteer licensed hams to assist in communications. The emphasis must be on portable communications in the sectors with the ability to assist the volunteers on the sites with communications between themselves and the central organization.

The ham radio operators can assist in communications with the Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies when those agencies are cooperative. The Com Center is a vital part of the organization and is under the overall direction of the Operations Officer.

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Cellular Phones

Your cell phone is your link with fellow volunteers, the operations center, law enforcement, emergency services and the Border Patrol. You will be notified by the Chapter of the section of the border you will be working, which cell phone company works best in the area and the ones that just do not work. Remember that we operate in rural areas close to or on the Mexican border. We have experienced significant interruption of cell phone use from the unlicensed and unregulated towers on the other side of the border. Also, a great number of American companies do not place towers near the border because of the small number of users and the frequency of vandalism. The way in which you report an unusual occurrence or people involved in suspicious behavior is:

Identify yourself as a MCDC volunteer. Give them your location. Report the group you have spotted in specifics. Example.

“Hello, good morning, this is Chris Simcox with the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps. I am at mile marker 5.5 overlooking the border road. I have spotted a hard count of 15 people who just entered the country illegally. They have crossed the fence and are headed up a trail towards the interior. They look as if they are taking the trail toward the mountains. There are 13 men and 2 women. We will continue to watch them so we can give more specifics to the agent who arrives to track them. How long do you think it will take an agent to arrive? If you need to call me back my cell phone number is... Thanks for your help.”

When the agent on the ground arrives, give them the information and direct them towards the group. Other than that, stay out of their way and let them do their job.

Section 3 *What Is It Like on the Line?*

Light and Noise Discipline

There are situations when it is important to create an obvious presence that deters illegal entry. There are situations when quiet observation is the tactic. Your supervisors will let you know which approach is appropriate.

During your time on the line, especially if you're serving during a night shift, you'll become keenly aware of the importance of light and noise discipline. Too much noise or light can cause illegal aliens to choose a different route where they may have better luck getting through, which is obviously counter-productive to our objective –an obvious presence deters people from entering the country illegally. This section is intended to briefly touch on the benefits of practicing good light and noise discipline and the effects it can have.

1. *I Think I'm Seeing Things...*

When working on the line during the night shift, your eyes and ears will inevitably play tricks on you. As the night drags on, don't be surprised if you think you see the trees

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decide to begin walking up the trail, and the later it gets, the rocks and leaves may begin to make strange noises, too. (If they start talking to you, seek medical help *immediately!*) This is perfectly normal, as we all have the urge to simply stop and take a nap at that hour of the night. Just don't light the trees up with your 10,000,000 candlepower light! That's a sure-fire way to give away your location to any nearby travelers. Stay calm, stand up and stretch or walk around your area for a few minutes to regain your alertness. If you're lucky, your shift supervisor will have some coffee handy; that usually helps, too.

2. *Get That Light Out of My Eyes!*

When you hear someone approaching your position unannounced, don't panic; it's probably a fellow volunteer or your shift supervisor. If you decide to shine a light in their eyes to determine their identity, you're liable to receive a few choice words in exchange, so *consider yourself warned*. Not only is it a nuisance to have a light shined in your eyes, it's also somewhat *painful*, and destroys your night vision for the next few minutes.

Lights should be used only in the most necessary manner: When identifying lost or necessary equipment, a small light with a blue or red lens does not give your location and does not destroy your night vision. Typical white light is useful for traversing difficult terrain, and most commonly, lighting up illegal intruders. Overuse of lights can be detrimental to security and the operation as a whole, so use a little common sense in this area; it'll go a long way.

3. *The Distance Noise Travels*

During your time on the line, the most valuable piece of equipment you'll have out there will be your ears. Listening for un-natural sounds, such as dogs barking, twigs and limbs snapping or the sound of leaves and gravel crunching under foot can be the first indication that there is movement in your sector. That being said, remember: *You're not the only one listening*. People moving through your area can hear *you* just as easily as you can hear *them*, so *keep the noise down!*

At night, especially when it's cold, noise seems to be able to travel forever. Every step you take will sound like a herd of elephants, so if you can find a comfortable place to remain in, try to. You may not be able to see very well at night, but your ears will pick up the slack. The less movement there is by you and your fellow volunteers at your location, the more likely you are to welcome in illegal travelers looking for a route by which to travel.

Finally, *stay off the radio!* Using your radio, especially at night, is a good way not only to give up *your* location, but the locations of *everyone else* on the net! Use your radio sparingly and in short bursts. (For more information, see section on Radio Function and Use.) Stay quiet and get to know the sounds of your area; once you've done that, you'll be able to easily identify the "out of place" noises you'll encounter.

By practicing good light and noise discipline, you help to raise the overall effectiveness of the operation, ensure security, and avoid angering your shift supervisor. A *quiet* night on the line is a *good* night on the line, so do your part to ensure things run as smoothly and effectively as possible. Let's all work together to maintain the "natural feel" of the environment.

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Section 4 *We Are Outdoors.*

Desert Survival

Life on the line is synonymous with life in the desert. When we talk about working shifts on the line, we're *really* talking about living in the *desert* (at least for a few hours at a time). Common sense dictates then, that the first and most important subject to be dealt with is water, or more importantly, the lack thereof. We can never express enough the importance of staying hydrated while you're out there on the line, and you must constantly be drinking fluids to protect yourself against the risk of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, or worse. Remember: The desert can be a harsh and unforgiving environment. Be prepared for it.

1. *The Climate*

Operating in the desert typically means two things: It's going to be hot during the day and cold at night. While heat casualties are always a concern, the variation between day and night temperatures can often catch people off guard, and you can easily find yourself a victim of hypothermia out there, as well. Isn't this starting to sound fun?

To top all of this off, we've also got next to no humidity in the air. If you're not from around here, you'll probably find yourself re-defining the word "dry" before you leave. After day 2 or 3, you'll want to buy stock in Chap Stick; it'll be your best friend. Many of the areas we operate in are also at a higher elevation than many of us are accustomed to, so don't overdo it out there. Give your body time to adjust or just take things at a little slower pace than you may really want to. The lower oxygen levels in the atmosphere only serve to compound the other climate conditions, so start drinking some water.

2. *Exposure*

While we've briefly mentioned the results of being caught unprepared in the desert, we need to discuss more closely some of the most common things we'll run up against out there.

Sunburn and chapped lips are probably the most common ailments, so make sure you've got a good supply of sunscreen and lip balm before you head out. You'll understand why as soon as you run into someone out there who *didn't* bother to bring those items, and you'll be thanking yourself that *you did* from there on out.

Dehydration is another problem we frequently see. It usually begins with the dry mouth, sometimes a headache or maybe feeling a little light headed. If this happens to you or you see it happening to someone else, ***get in the shade immediately!!*** There's no room for candy-coating here: Dehydration can lead directly to death. If something like this happens, don't panic; call your shift supervisor so we can get that volunteer out of there and taken care of. This is when keeping an eye on each other can prove to be a life-saving practice; remind each other to drink water on a constant basis. Are you drinking water yet?

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3. *What to Wear*

Wear a hat! Day and night a hat is important. While we want you to be as comfortable as possible we strongly recommend not wearing shorts or short sleeve shirts while you're on the line. Of course, you may if you wish, but bear in mind where you are: the desert in all its levels is full of numerous cacti and other assorted scratchy plants! Don't end up making yourself miserable.

Pants and a t-shirt are usually appropriate for day and afternoon operations, but you may want to keep a sweatshirt handy. It's usually chilly in the early morning, and the evening goes from hot to cold in no time at all.

Those lucky (and daring) souls who volunteer for the night shift will need a few more layers of warmth. While long pants will be sufficient for your legs, the extreme temperature drop will leave you feeling cold, so you'll also want to have a couple long shirts and a jacket. If spring or fall is in the air, it's going to get *cold*. You'll definitely need more layers, and probably a heavy coat, too. Be careful not to misplace your canteen in the dark, because you *still* need to be drinking water.

The desert is a beautiful but harsh place to be, and in order to enjoy your time there you must constantly be aware of your surroundings, each other's physical states, and the ever present need to drink water. As long as you respect the desert, she'll treat you to a beautiful and magnificent show. Don't forget to take your sunscreen and canteen, and remember:

Drink Water!!

Section 5 *I Am Here, But Where Am I?*

Sector Orientation

Your experience in the field will be largely shaped by what sector your assigned station is in. It's important to understand your sector location relative to others, where other stations are within your sector, what's nearby and accessible to you, and what areas are not to be entered. This section is meant to serve as a guide for you once you have arrived at your sector and will begin your tour of "the line" and the individual stations. Enjoy the scenery, watch your step and *drink some water!*

1. *What's a Sector?*

A sector is a pre-determined area, usually only 2 or 3 miles long, that has a history of a high illegal traffic rate. There will usually be a road that is targeted as an area to line the stations up along, hence the term "the line". A sector usually consists of 10 – 15 stations, and those are usually no more than a couple hundred yards apart. When beginning their volunteer service with *Minuteman Corps*, people will be assigned to a sector and a station to work in, based on either the scenery, or the amount of activity within that sector. You'll want to be able to locate your sector on a road map or atlas for future reference.

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2. *What's a Station?*

To put it simply, your station is your home. A station is commonly referred to as a “post”. A station is a “post” within a sector. Occasionally corps leaders will determine if adjustments are needed to create special area outposts in areas other than along a “static front”.

When you arrive at your station, you should take a close look around at what *is* and *isn't* around you. Try to identify possible routes that illegal aliens may take, and check with your shift supervisor for any information that may not have been relayed to you regarding previous activity at your station. Your shift supervisor should know the area well, so don't neglect that valuable resource. Also, be aware of existing fences and other boundaries and don't cross them. Roving foot patrols are not allowed under the SOP. They keep you in the right area, and damage to them can serve as an indication of previous traffic near your station.

3. *The Need to Know Our Stations*

There are a number of obvious reasons you'll want to be aware of landmarks near and around your station. From a security standpoint, each volunteer should know the location, as well as the best route to, their adjacent stations. This is just one more example of watching out for each other.

You'll also want to know significant landmarks, the names of nearby roads and subdivisions and most importantly, at what mile marker your post is located. This information is frequently used when contacting Border Patrol to report illegal activity.

You'll also find it helpful to know the location of nearby amenities, services and even restaurants. If you should run out of certain supplies, need some refreshments, or have any special needs, there's often a convenience store or other amenity relatively nearby. Check with your shift supervisor for the locations of amenities near your station.

4. *Manning Your Station*

The need to remain at your assigned station during your shift cannot be overstated. Each time a station is left unmanned, we run the risk of illegal traffic moving through. It may sound a bit *hokey*, but *it's happened before*. If you decide you need to leave your station, please contact your shift supervisor to give a “heads up”. The shift supervisor will likely fill your station with another volunteer or man the station himself until you return. Leaving your station unannounced can leave others on the line guessing, and should you become injured, make locating you that much more difficult. *Please*, for the sake of safety, security and the mission, *do not leave your station*.

The more you know about your sector, and the individual stations within it, the less confusion you'll experience during your time on the line, especially during the most hectic moments. Try to take the opportunity to tour the line a couple of times on your own, and be able to identify each position on the map. The more comfortable you are with your surroundings, the more comfortable you'll be.

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Section 6 We are Here to Help

One of the most common problems faced by *Minuteman Corps* is the ability to use volunteers to their fullest capacity. Many of us have special skills or insight that we're happy to throw into the mix, but the opportunity to do so isn't always there. At times, people will become frustrated and decide to do things the way *they* want to see them done, but the results are usually not what they had hoped for. This section is intended to inform you of some of the consequences of becoming "overly zealous" and how it can affect you, our operations and the organization as a whole.

1. *The Ninja Turtle Effect*

The most common problem we face as an organization when dealing with over-zealous volunteers is what we like to call the "Ninja Turtle Effect". Many of us here have backgrounds in military and law enforcement operations, and some see our operations here as a way to "re-live the glory days".

To put it simply, for a number of reasons, we cannot. Let's be perfectly clear about this: *Minuteman Corps* has a "Zero-Tolerance" policy regarding Ninja Turtles.

Primarily, *Minuteman Corps* is not a military-oriented organization and we have no intentions of ever being one. While we encourage people to dress comfortably while on the line, we *will not accept* anyone dressing in *full* military or "special-ops" garb; it sends an image to the public that we don't want sent. The last thing we as an organization need is to have volunteers running through the hills dressed in face paint and ghillie suits; imagine how Border Patrol and other law enforcement personnel may respond to you if they encounter you in those circumstances.

Minuteman Corps is a peaceful, non-confrontational organization that has no interest in being labeled otherwise. If you encounter any "Ninja Turtles", "Rambos" or other assorted free-lance weekend-warriors, please report them to your shift supervisor immediately. They will conform to the SOP or will be dismissed from the operation.

2. *Fear Factor Rising*

As has been stated previously, life on the line can be somewhat stressful at times. The last thing any of us need is to have another, avoidable influence raising that level of stress into the realm of fear. Ninja Turtles *love* to tell people of how life here is just like life in Vietnam, or Korea, or other assorted conflicts throughout American history. The fact is: *it's not*. The chances of a violent incident occurring out there are next to none; so don't expect to have that happen.

When you're out there on the line, stay calm, stay relaxed, but always stay alert. Most often, a serious incident can be avoided altogether before it even begins. Don't let rumors get your blood pressure up; they're nothing more than rumors. (See section on Threat Assessment for more information) When in doubt, contact your shift supervisor with any questions or concerns.

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Minuteman Corps Volunteers actions are to ***Observe, Report and Direct*** period. Nothing more, nothing less; if you are going to have a problem with this, stay home.

Section 7 Who Are the People We Are Meeting?

During your time on the line, you're bound to meet some of the most interesting people you've ever had the pleasure of meeting. This section is intended to help you understand who and what you may run into out there, and addresses a few ways of interacting with them.

1. Your Fellow Volunteer

The ***Minuteman Corps*** experience is unique in that it brings people from all walks of life together under one common cause.

We each bring unique gifts and traits to the table to share, so always bear that in mind. Some of us are military veterans, some have law enforcement background, some of us work in corporate environments, some of us work in the labor trades, some of us are highly educated and some of us got our degrees from the School of Hard Knocks. In an environment like this, trying to accomplish what we are, diversity is a priceless asset and should be embraced by all. Take the time to get to know your fellow volunteers; you'll be richer for your efforts, and you may walk away from this experience with a whole new perspective on life.

Another common factor that ensures integrity: all volunteers have been subjected to a criminal background check.

2. The Locals

One of the most rewarding experiences of your time volunteering with ***Minuteman Corps*** will be your interaction with the locals. Don't be surprised by the number of people constantly honking and waving as they drive by, and look forward to the opportunity to speak with them personally. Each one has a story to tell, experiences to share and, more often than not, will bring a little home-cooking along, too. We encourage you to take the time to accept their thanks, get to know them a little, and gain some perspective on the realities of life on the border. Just remember why we're here; don't get distracted and forget to keep an eye on your assigned station while you're chatting.

3. The Press

Minuteman Corps has a policy of honesty and transparency when dealing with anyone, especially the press. That being said, dealing with the press can often turn out to be an intimidating experience. If you feel comfortable talking to reporters, then have at it. If you don't, then simply refer them to the ***Minuteman Corps*** Press Officer and continue about your business. Should the press at any time become "too aggressive" for your tolerance, simply contact your shift supervisor. Finally, remember this: Everything you say is being recorded, so use a little common sense when dealing with the press. Don't

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get caught saying something that can be misconstrued or used against the organization as a whole. When in doubt, refer them to the Press Officer or your shift supervisor.

4. *Antagonists*

Antagonists are simply a part of life out there on the line and are not to be feared. Regardless of what you may say or do, some people you just can't reach. When individuals or groups of individuals decide to taunt you, crowd your space, or simply hurl insults at you, just give them a smile and a friendly wave. Remember, we're above that sort of approach, which is why we do things the way we do. Give them all the space and time they require to make fools of themselves; more than likely, they will.

As a rule of thumb, you should discreetly contact your shift supervisor immediately upon the arrival of antagonists so we can monitor and document their activities. If an individual threatens you in any manner, please contact your shift supervisor immediately. There are laws to protect you against that sort of thing, and the local law enforcement is usually happy to give free car rides complete with shiny bracelets.

If you stay polite, ignore their taunts and threats and continue about your tasks, chances are they'll eventually get bored and leave. *Don't let them get under your skin; that's just what they're looking for.* It's always better to just walk away and call for help if all else fails.

All in all, the vast majority of volunteers come away from their time on the line without having had *any* type of negative interaction, and we hope that's the case for you too. The time you spend interacting with your fellow volunteers and the locals you'll have a chance to meet will likely enrich your life, and you just may walk away from all this with some meaningful, lasting friendships...

Section 8 Threat Assessment and Rumor Control

Operating in the field brings with it a certain amount of danger that, when properly identified and understood, can be practically alleviated. This section is intended to raise your awareness of specific threats you may encounter while operating on the line, and how to deal with each one individually. By being aware and staying alert, you *greatly* reduce the chances of an unwanted incident occurring.

1. *I've Fallen and I Can't Get Up!*

Accidents are the most common, and most preventable, problem we as an organization face while serving on the line. *Be careful out there!* Use common sense when moving into unfamiliar areas, and take the time to get to know your surroundings. A sprained ankle or a nasty cut from rusty barbed wire are but two examples of how to end your participation in the operation earlier than expected. Not only does personal injury affect *you*, but also it requires *other people* to leave their assigned areas in order to provide you with medical care and ensure your safety. Pay attention to where you're walking and what you're doing, and don't forget to drink water. A heat casualty is yet another example of a preventable injury.

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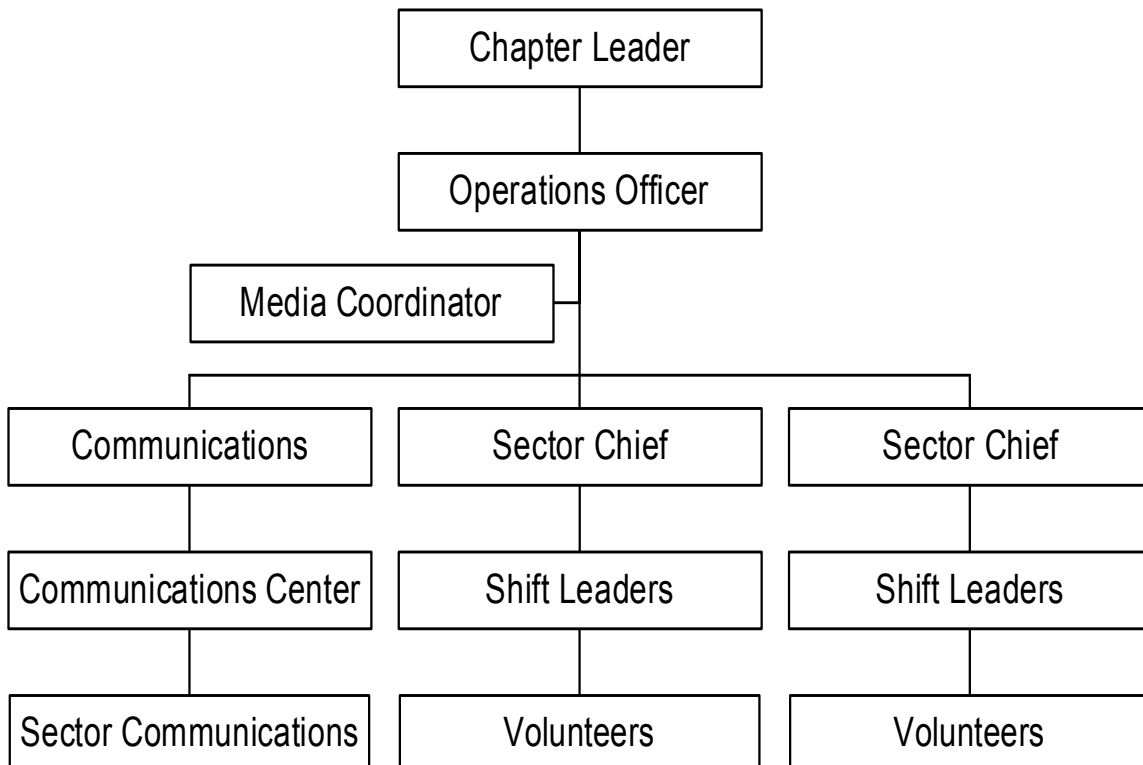
2. *The Javelina Are After Me!*

While you're serving on the line, you'll likely come into contact with some form of the indigenous wildlife in your area--other than the *unlikely* "Cujo" scenario in which herds of javelina, jackrabbit or deer decide to charge your position. This does not happen. The animals will want to avoid *you* even more than you'll want to avoid *them*.

The best practice is to give them respect and *space*. **NEVER** try to approach a wild animal; *especially* the ones who have their young present with them, That's a great way to win a not-so-free trip to the hospital. If you should encounter a rattlesnake or another type of dangerous wildlife, *keep your distance* and call your shift supervisor immediately.

Section 9 *Chain of Command*

Chapter Organization Chart



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Section 10 What Do I Bring to This Thing?

Minuteman Duffle: The well-equipped Minuteman shall have with them a **minimum** of:

1. Long Pants
2. Long Sleeved Shirt
3. Clean Socks
4. T-shirt
5. Hat
6. Light Jacket or Sweatshirt
7. Windbreaker
8. Rain Gear
9. Sturdy Shoes or Boots
10. Gloves
11. Sun Block
12. Sun Glasses
13. Water Containers, Water and Snacks
14. Insect Repellant
15. Chair
16. Cooler
17. Binoculars
18. FRS Radio(s)
19. Spare Batteries
20. Cell Phone & Car Charger
21. Video Camera, Still (digital) Camera and or Audio Recorder
22. Flashlight and Extra Batteries

Nice to Have:

1. Spotting Scope
2. Digital Video Camera
3. Night Vision Equipment
4. Blanket and Ground Pad
5. Hydration Drinks
6. Re-hydration Fluid, Pedialite
7. Personal First-Aid Kit
8. Sense of Humor

Extra handy to have:

1. Thermo Camera
2. Infrared Detection Devices
3. Motion Sensors
4. Trail Counter

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Section 10 *Where Do I Stay?*

Minuteman Corps Volunteers come to the border with what we need to carry out the operation. In many areas the Minuteman Corps has been able to make arrangements with camps or private schools for lodging. We have also been able to make arrangements with local lodging facilities for discounts.

Camping:

We have been able in some areas to arrange for camping on local farms and ranches. These areas are used for RV's and Tent Camping. In all cases we will make sure that Port-a-Potties are available. More information will be made available from the Chapter responsible for organizing your area of the border.

Waste Disposal

Port-a-Potties will be made available on each of the Sectors. We have a strict policy of Pack-in/Pack-out. Trash receptacles will be available at camping areas when practical.

Nearby Necessities

The Sponsoring Chapter will have maps available showing the Sectors and the location of all necessary services required by the Minuteman Corps Volunteers.

Section 11 Applicable State/Federal Laws and Regulations

The Sponsoring Chapter will have a handout concerning local, state and federal laws that apply to the operations within the area. This will include but not be limited to firearms laws, camping laws, land use laws, required permits and local ordinances.

